



NEWS RELEASE

STATE OF NEBRASKA

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
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Prepare for Potential Flooding in Wake of Heavy Rains in Colorado

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency and local emergency managers along the South Platte River are urging citizens in western Nebraska to prepare for the potential flooding as early as Tuesday, Sept. 17.

Heavy rains in Colorado have closed highways and caused evacuations, and emergency managers in Nebraska want to be prepared in the event waters reach outside river banks in Nebraska.

"Overgrown, dry riverbeds could lead to flooding outside of usual channels because of debris and overgrowth," reports Earl Imler, NEMA response and recover section manager. "It's very possible with the amount of rain Colorado has experienced, and the predictions for continued rain along the South Platte River, that Nebraska could experience flooding next week. We want everyone to be prepared."

Local emergency managers ask that businesses along the South Platte River prepare for possible flooding by moving any equipment out of low-lying areas.

"We'll be in touch with local land owners to make sure they are aware of the potential for higher water," said Pete Peterson of Keith County Emergency Management.

"Moving livestock and property away from the river is essential," said Ron Leal of Region 21 Emergency Management. "We just want everyone to be aware and listen to the news for updates."

"We're getting ready, just in case," said Dan Guenthner of Lincoln County Emergency Management. "Staying out of flood waters is essential. We want to make sure people are aware that it's not safe to go swimming or boating in fast moving flood waters."

Some flooding safety tips:

- Keep informed. Listen to the television or radio or search the Internet for information and instructions.
- Secure your home. If you have time, bring in outdoor furniture. Move essential items to an upper floor.

- If instructed to do so, turn off utilities at the main switches or valves.
- Disconnect electrical appliances. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are standing in water.
- Do not walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
- Do not drive into flooded areas. If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle can be swept away quickly.
- Health officials urge you to avoid flood waters, even if they look safe. Water can contain sewage, debris, bacteria and other items.

Visit <http://www.nema.ne.gov/newsroom/flooding-information.shtml> for information of flood safety.

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